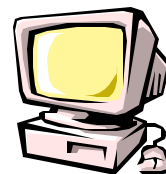




Porter Henderson Library Faculty Newsletter



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A Word from the Director

..... Dr. Maurice G. Fortin (942-2222, ext. 222)

Construction on the Library's new floor and renovations on existing floors continues at a rapid pace. Within the last few weeks the Second Floor restrooms are once again open. The original elevator continues to be off-line. There is no word on when the work on this elevator will be over. Construction workers are busy finishing the drywall, painting, floors, woodwork, and installation of all the network and

electrical connections throughout the new floor.

Most of the floor's new occupants are busy selecting and finalizing orders for new furniture and equipment. The Library is working with the University's Purchasing Office on the order for the shelving units for the two new storage rooms.

Work also continues on plans for more extensive renovation of the Library's existing three floors. Staff members are reviewing a second draft of those plans. Other groups are developing cost estimates associated

with the renovation proposals. Hopefully, the Library will submit a final renovation plan to the Provost's Office by the end of March.

Please be aware there will be reduced services over the week of Spring Break (March 15-19). Four of the librarians plan to attend the Annual Conference of the Texas Library Association (March 17-20), the third largest library association in the world. The annual conference attracts between 7,000-8,000 members, speakers, and exhibitors. One of this year's featured speakers is presidential candidate and

consumer advocate Ralph Nader. Because this year's conference is over Spring Break, service reductions in the Library should be minimal. A complete listing of the Library's hours of operation over Spring Break may be found on page 4 of this *Newsletter*.

In this issue of the *Newsletter*, you will also learn how library usage has changed in the past few years and about a new online tutorial developed by Hongxia Yang, Media Librarian, and Mark Allan, Head of Reference. Janetta Paschal, Government Documents/Reference Librarian, also provides another "birthday update" on the Voyager system, which became available for public use on March 18, 2001.

Is Library Usage Down or Changing? Academic Libraries in the 21st Century

..... Dr. Maurice G. Fortin, Library Director

In the February 13 *Ram Page* article concerning library usage, a reader may get the impression that academic libraries are deserted facilities no longer needed on the modern campus. Well I think that is very far from the true picture of the role for 21st century academic libraries.

The best way to determine the quality of an academic library today is not by how many books are owned or checked out or questions asked, but rather does the library supply students and faculty members with needed information in a timely fashion. The 21st century academic library has a much harder mission than previous libraries. The number and types of information resources have grown exponentially over the years. Libraries now acquire, organize, preserve, and provide access to medieval manuscripts, 19th century diaries, books, magazines, LPs (vinyl records), cassette and reel-to-reel tapes, CDs, DVDs, VHS video tapes, microforms (dots to reels), networked databases, electronic books and theses, on-line catalogs, links to Internet related sites, and the list can literally go on for many more lines.

In 1996, the ASU Library had 2,200 active, print periodicals and two or three electronic databases (accessible only from within the Library building on stand alone CD-ROM workstations). The Library was

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only open about 87 hours a week. Less than 2,000 students a year received instruction on how to use these library resources. Today, ASU students and faculty members can access articles from over 14,000 periodicals on-line and search over 150 databases for up to 24 hours a day from the Library, campus computer labs and offices, or from off-campus sites through the dial-up service or the proxy server provided by Information Technology. Each year, the equivalent of half the student body receives instruction on how to search these databases and other library resources. In 1997 (the first year they were available), ASU users performed over 37,000 searches and viewed nearly 145,000 citations and articles in on-line databases. In 2003, ASU users performed nearly 178,000 searches and viewed or read over 201,000 articles (many in a full-image format) and citations. In 1993, the Library did not have a web site. Today, with over 500,000 hits a year, the Library's web site is one of the most heavily used sites on campus.

In 1993, there was only one reference librarian in the ASU Library. Today reference services require 2.5 FTE dedicated positions plus help from the rest of the professional staff. Questions have grown from less than 11,000 per year to nearly 20,000 in a typical year.

In 1996, undergraduate students had to have the permission of an instructor before they could use Interlibrary Loan (ILL) services. As a result, the ASU Library primarily lent resources to users from other universities and colleges. Today, any student can use ILL services. In 2003, ASU students and faculty members borrowed 1,407 books and received 2,346 articles (most free of charge) from other libraries through the ILL service. The average turn around time to receive the materials went from weeks to seven or ten working days. With a TexShare borrowing card, ASU students and faculty members can go to over 120 libraries (academic and public) in Texas and borrow materials as though they were a member of that campus or community.

I could go on with more and more examples of how usage changed from 1993 to 2003. I hope the reader will see that usage is not down in the ASU Library; it is changing and growing.

Once the Third Floor construction project ends, I plan to submit a comprehensive remodeling proposal for the rest of the Library's existing floors. I hope to add amenities such as a comfortable/leisure reading area on Second Floor, more group study rooms, a student lounge with vending machines, better furniture, and more room for the Juvenile and Curriculum Collections, plus other new or improved features.

Academic libraries in the 21st century have a vital role to play in the college curriculum and in the general student experience. As I often stress, the most important ability a student gains during her/his four+ years in college is to learn how to learn. Almost everyone will change careers, or at least job responsibilities and duties, many times during his/her lifetime. To be successful the individual must be able to learn new skills and to develop new knowledge sets. Hopefully that is what a student takes away from ASU, that ability to learn. Libraries and librarians have the role of working with faculty members to help develop this essential skill in students. The librarians at ASU work very closely with faculty members to help students develop their information literacy skills. By that I mean the ability to find/seek information, to evaluate information (is it reliable and credible), and then to analyze the information and use it to complete assignments and research projects. As I indicated, this is a vital role the ASU librarians play on our campus by helping students become information literate and successful in the 21st century.

To learn more about resources and services available in the ASU Library, please visit our web site at <http://www.angelo.edu/services/library>.

The Voyager Numbers Game

..... Janetta Paschal

Can you identify the significance of any of these numbers: 36? 307,832? 321,034? 346,455? 64,365? 22,916? 243? 916? 39,313? 810? 98? 6,304? 3?

As of February 29, 2004, thirty-six (36) operators over the past few years have added 307,832 bibliographic records, 321,034 holding records, and 346,455 item records to RamCat (among other types of records and data). Included in some of those bibliographic and holding records are a total of 64,365 URLs, including 22,916 ".gov," 243 ".edu," 916 ".org," 39,313 ".com," 810 ".state.tx.us," and 98 ".mil" Internet domain addresses. The library's integrated system (Voyager) contains 6,304 patron records. And Voyager turns 3 on March 18, 2004.

Yes, Voyager's birthday has rolled around once again. The "new" RamCat came up live for public use three years ago, on March 18, 2001. The library staff has weathered Voyager's "terrible twos" successfully without any major difficulties and is now cruising out of the third year of use and into the fourth. RamCat is maturing and changing, as does any three-year-old, but

this is not accomplished without successful parenting. Antonella Ward, Electronic Resources Librarian and herself the mother of a four-year-old, has been overseeing the changes in RamCat.

This past year Antonella, Mark Allan, Sharon Weber (Interlibrary Loan Assistant), and members of the Information Technology staff have worked hard to bring several new services to the university community through RamCat. Some of these services required a marriage of sorts between Voyager and a third-party interlibrary loan management software package. After some fits and starts and “temper tantrums” (by the software, not by staff members), the Interlibrary Loan module is now part of Sharon's everyday workflow. As a result of this marriage of software, authorized patrons have the ability to submit

interlibrary loan requests from within the online catalog, to check the status of their ILL requests, to verify what titles they have checked out (ILL or otherwise) and their respective due dates, and to find out whether or not they owe any fines.

Another aspect of Voyager, highlighted in last year's Voyager update, is the increasing presence of links to online resources and electronic-only publications in RamCat. These links have helped patrons access some types of library materials even when the Library is not open. A large portion of these online materials is composed of the netLibrary e-books but a larger portion is government publications from both the federal and the state governments. “Government publications” can be found on .gov sites, .mil sites, .edu sites, .org sites, or .state.tx.us sites.

Selected URL Hosts	Number of Links in Bibliographic Records	
	Feb. 28, 2003	Feb. 29, 2004
www.netLibrary.com	17,497	18,486
purl.access.gpo.gov	5,475	10,180
www.loc.gov	294	1,049
commdocs.house.gov	117	212
www.ncjrs.org	107	120
frwebgate.access.gpo.gov	95	162
www.window.state.tx.us	90	135
firstsearch.oclc.org	54	154
tcebookstore.org	6	73
lcweb.loc.gov	53	57
agpublications.tamu.edu	52	0
www.ojp.usdoj.gov	40	41
www.census.gov	36	42
www.senate.state.tx.us	36	38
Total Number of URL Hosts	390	547
Total Number of Links	25,000	64,365

Electronic publications are easily removed from servers, or moved to new servers; their “addresses” change. Sometimes the technological setup on a server changes, or the “corporate culture” could change which might in turn lead to differences in viewpoints as to how people access electronic publications. Updating URLs is a major undertaking to

incorporate into a library staff's workflow, but one of those maintenance projects that the library is facing if we want to have correct information available to RamCat users.

For example, in the entries in the table above notice that the URL host “agpublications.tamu.edu” went from 52 links in 2003 to 0 links in 2004. This is a

prime example of how things change in an online world. The original host was a server maintained by Texas A&M University (the Texas Agricultural Extension Service, to be precise). This Service changed names a few years ago to Texas Cooperative Extension. Publications from the original Agricultural Extension Service are now available from the TCE Bookstore and online versions of these titles have been relocated to another server, "tcebookstore.org."

The URLs in RamCat were corrected to reflect this change; however, further checking revealed that these new links did not connect a day later. On February 27, 2004, the TCE Bookstore webmaster sent information that indicated the TCE no longer allows direct access to the PDF files on their server. When someone views a PDF file from the TCE Bookstore's web site it is not the "real" PDF, but only a copy made to a temporary location on the server which is cleared out every hour. While patrons had direct access to these types of files on the "agpublications.tamu.edu" server that same access now is not allowed on the new server. Every one of the 73 links to the tcebookstore.org server in RamCat will have to be deleted.

And this is only one small example of what is involved in keeping URLs current in RamCat. With over 64,000 links in RamCat, and counting, there is an increasing need for "link checking." But providing quality service to our users is a top priority so we will be checking them.

As Voyager moves into its fourth year of service to the University community, under the careful "parenting" of Antonella and the continued upkeep and maintenance of the records in the database by library staff members, RamCat users should continue to find timely information available for their use, in some cases no matter the time of day.

Spring Break Hours

March 13-14 Closed
 March 15-19 8:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.
 March 20 Closed
 March 21 Resume Regular Hours

West Texas Collection

March 13-14 Closed
 March 15-19 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
 March 20-21 Closed
 March 22 Resume Regular Hours

It's OK to be Distant: New Online Library Tutorial

..... Mark Allan

The Library has a new interactive tutorial available for all students and faculty who need a general introduction to the ASU Library and its resources, located at <http://www.angelo.edu/services/library/handouts/eng1302/>. This tutorial was developed in-house by Hongxia Yang and Mark Allan, with the indispensable assistance of Dr. Nancy Allen, Dr. Gloria Duarte, and the other faculty of the English Department.

While specifically developed for the general research needs of students taking English 1302, other faculty will find it useful to supplement or replace basic Library orientations for a variety of disciplines. Other possibilities include its use by students absent from class the date of scheduled library orientations, distance learning students, and transfer students.

There are plans to customize the tutorial for use by lower division students in various disciplines, such as Biology and Nursing, however, it should be noted that the tutorial is not intended to teach research on the level needed by upper-division students, nor does it include an introduction to the specialized research needs of various elements of the University curriculum. The Library plans to continue offering instruction regarding library use and information literacy for all students at ASU, but can now offer this option to faculty and students who would like to take advantage of it.

For more information, please contact Mark Allan at (325) 942-2551 or mark.allan@angelo.edu.

March 16, 2004 Freedom of Information Day

Freedom of Information Day is held on or near March 16, the birthday of James Madison, fourth President of the United States and primary architect of the Bill of Rights. The observance underscores the importance of freedoms of the press, speech, and information, and the public's right to know.

*"Knowledge will forever govern ignorance,
and a people who mean to be their own
governors must arm themselves with the
power which knowledge gives."*